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Economic Impacts of Trails

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Benefits

- The Economic and Social Benefit of Trails In Minnesota
- Economic and Social Benefits of Off-Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, 1992 (pdf 377kb)
- Economic Benefits of Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation to Arizona
- The Economic Benefits of Trails from Go for Green, Canada (pdf 372kb)
- The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space
- How land conservation helps communities grow smart
- Economic Benefits of Greenways: Summary of Findings
- The Economic Benefits of Trails (pdf 20kb), from the American Hiking Society
- Economic Value of Walkability (pdf 148kb), Victoria Transport Policy Institute
- How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development (pdf 392kb)
- How cities use parks for community revitalization (pdf 382kb)

Business

- Implementing Trail-Based Economic Development Programs: A Handbook for Iowa Communities
- Economic and other benefits of the Heritage Rail Trail
- Many photos and examples of business along the Longleaf Trace in Mississippi
- How's business on the Katy Trail? Entrepreneurs see opportunities
- Host Towns Agree: Cyclists are a Bonanza
- How Methow Valley grew an economy

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Studies

- Analysis of Economic Impacts of the Northern Central Rail Trail, Maryland Greenways Commission
- Economic Benefits of the Prairie Spirit Trail (pdf 28 kb)
- Forest Recreation's Growing Impact
- Heritage Rail Trail County Park User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis (pdf 192 kb)
- Little Miami Scenic Trail Economic Study (Word 540 kb)
- Maximizing Economic Benefits from a Rails-to-Trails Project, case study of the Greenbrier River Trail, WV
- Economic Impact Analysis: Trans Canada Trail In Ontario (pdf 1.6 mb)
- Nordic Ski Trail Easements and Property Values
- The National Park Service Resource Book on Economic Values of Greenways, Trails, and River Protection
- Off-Highway Vehicle economic impacts In New Hampshire
- Economic Impacts of bike tourism In Colorado
- The Virginia Creeper Trail Economic Impact Analysis
- The Washington & Old Dominion Trail Economic Impact Analysis
- New River State Park trails Economic Impact Analysis

Valuing trails

- A Contingent Trip Model for Estimating Rail-trail Demand, USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station
- What's a Trail Really Worth? looking at the range of economic impacts
- Trails expenditures shown to reduce health-care costs
- Park Trail Usage Patterns and Public Sentiment Toward Maintenance and Operation Cost of the East Bay Regional Park District Trail System
- Railtrails and special events: community and economic benefits
- Documenting economic and community benefits of trails

Tourism

► For more on training opportunities for trail design, construction, and management, see the [National Trails Training Partnership](#) area.

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Good publications help visitors find your trail

The Mississippi River Trail: It's all about connections

Market that trail: advertise your product!

Richmond, CA Convention & Visitors Bureau features birding tourism along Bay Trail (pdf 44 kb)

Florida Discovery Bicycling Center program combines adult bicycle safety training and touring into vacations

U.S. President rides mountain bike trails at Tamarack Resort

Underground Railroad Bicycle Route opens for touring

Implementing Trail-Based Economic Development Programs: a handbook for Iowa communities (pdf 1.6mb)

Economic Impact of Investments in bicycle facilities: A Case Study of the North Carolina Northern Outer Banks

Navigating the Erie Canal: a Òmega-trailÓ journey

Trail Tourism: promotion of the Katy Trail in Missouri

Trails and Tourism: Long distance hiking as a cultural experience

Trails and Tourism: Issues in partnering with the tourism industry: a European perspective

Australia's National Ecotourism Strategy is on-line at: <http://tourism.gov.au/archive.htm>



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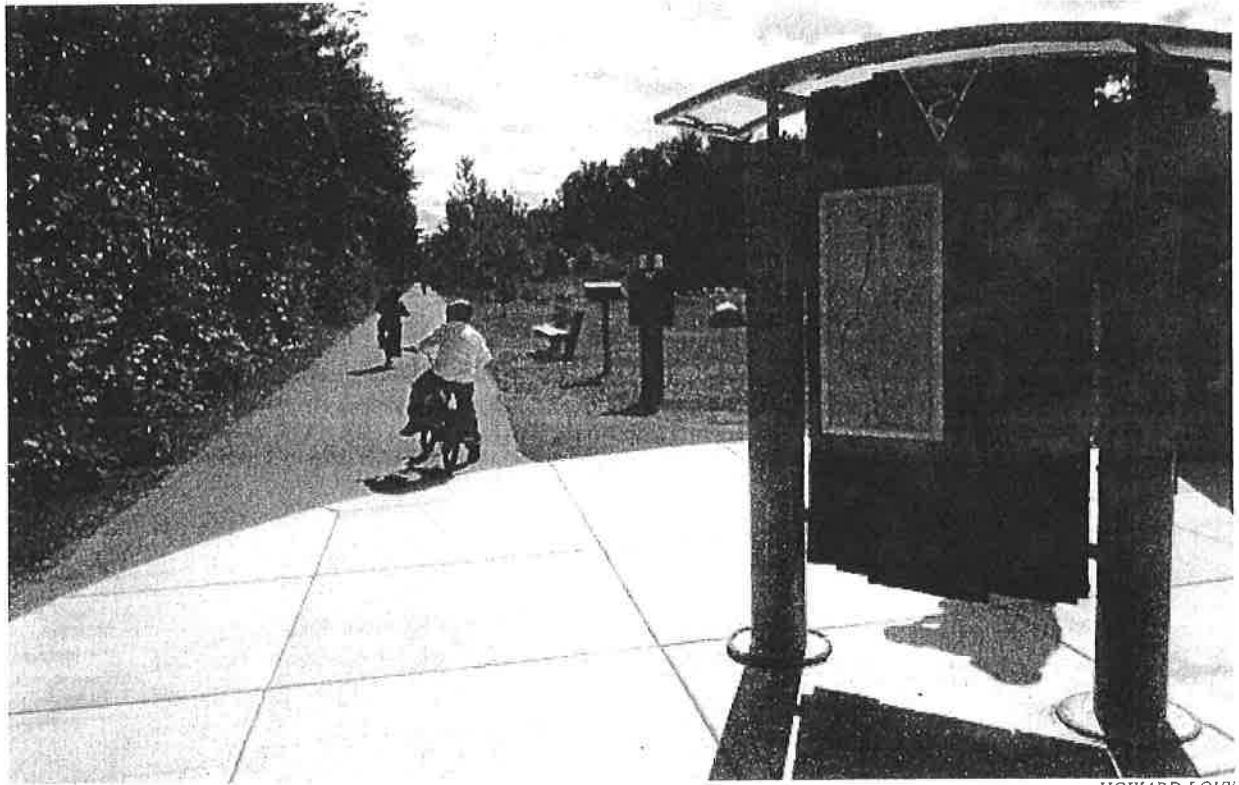
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Bike trails bring two-wheel tourism to northern Michigan businesses

By Howard Lovy



A 15.5-mile bicycle trail connects Traverse City and Suttons Bay.

Before Nick Wierzba and his wife moved to her home state of Michigan in mid-March, he spent seven years at **Napa Valley Bike Tours** leading thousands of people on treks through California's wine country — without a path specifically for bicycles.

So when Wierzba and wife Kasey heard that more bike trails were being paved in Michigan's own version of Napa Valley — the Leelanau Peninsula — "that was kind of the kick in the pants to say hey, if we don't open a bike shop, somebody's going to open a bike shop," Wierzba said.

In June, they set up **Suttons Bay Bikes-Grand Traverse Bike Tours** in Suttons Bay, about 15 miles north of Kasey Wierzba's childhood hometown of Traverse City.

"If this were in Napa, California, many, many more people would ride their bikes to and from the wineries," Wierzba said. With the scenery, quiet trails and short detours to Leelanau Peninsula wineries, he said, "this is probably one of the best places to ride in the whole state."

One of those wineries, **Black Star Farms**, has seen more customers on two wheels at both of its locations, in Suttons Bay and Old Mission Peninsula, said Coryn Briggs, director of marketing at the winery.

"Along the Old Mission Peninsula, bikers will often stop for a sample and return after the ride to purchase because they don't have any place to store the wine on their bikes," Briggs said. "At our Suttons Bay location, we have seen a big increase of bikers on tours arranged and facilitated by Grand Traverse Bike Tours."

It is no accident that bike tourism is growing in northern Michigan. The network of paved trails has been in the works for a little more than two decades, when planning began on a 15.5-mile paved alley, built on a former railroad corridor and connecting Traverse City with Suttons Bay. Just last summer, the final 6.2 miles of the **Leelanau Trail** was paved.



HEIDI LOVY

The recently paved four-mile stretch of bike trails going through Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

This past summer also saw the ribbon-cutting on the first four miles of the **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail**, which promises eventually to take bicyclists from the southern edge of Leelanau County through **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore** to Good Harbor Bay.

The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail comes just in time for fall color season and follows a successful tourist season — the first one after viewers of ABC's "Good Morning America" voted Sleeping Bear Dunes the "Most Beautiful Place in America."

So far, the Sleeping Bear trail has attracted \$8.5 million in state and federal grants and \$1.1 million in private donations, said Patty O'Donnell, regional planner for the **Northwest Michigan Council of Governments** and project manager for the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail.

This first four miles of paved trail begins at Sleeping Bear's Dune Climb — a big draw for tourists — then wends its way through Glen Haven's historic district and beach to just outside Glen Arbor.

In fact, O'Donnell said, the trail is not only for tourists. The locals now can get from one point to another without getting into their cars.

Matt Wiesen, owner of **Crystal River Outfitters** in Glen Arbor, recently branched out from canoe and kayak rentals to open **The Cyclery**, which rents and repairs bikes.

"Once we got our feet wet and we saw that there was an opportunity, that's when we decided to really go for it, open up a full-blown bike shop," Wiesen said. "Timingwise, it was absolutely perfect just because the trail ended up becoming a reality."

Wiesen said a combination of increased visibility of the area through Sleeping Bear's national publicity and the new trail delivered his shop a lucrative summer.

"Whether you are associated with the bike business at all," he said, "it really doesn't matter, because all these people who are coming to ride, they need to eat lunch, they need to go shopping, they need lodging, so it's a win-win for the entire community."

The trail opens up possibilities beyond biking, whose season "starts as soon as the snow melts and goes until the snow flies," Wiesen said. Because the trail will be groomed in the winter, his shop will rent cross-country skis and snowshoes, enabling him to retain more employees year round.

Nancy Krupiarz, executive director of the nonprofit **Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance**, said her group's goal is to see that the state becomes a national leader in bike trails.

"We are going to be among the top five in bicycle tourism in the next five years if everything keeps going the way it is," Krupiarz said. "We're really hoping to get all of our stakeholders preparing for this so that there are connections, there are businesses that offer trail users services."

Although no estimates exist of the total statewide impact of bike trails, Krupiarz said, some grant funding is in place to do an economic impact study in Michigan.

Numbers from other regions indicate it's worth the investment, she said.

In the **Great Allegheny Passage**, a bike trail running from Maryland to Pennsylvania, annual direct spending coming from the trail was \$40.8 million in 2008, Krupiarz said.



U.S. Bike Routes 20 and 35.

She also points to the successful designation of two U.S. bike routes — which required coordination involving nonprofit groups, the state and local governments — as examples of Michigan's rolling in the right direction on bike tourism.

U.S. Bike Route 20 runs through 310 miles across the middle of Michigan, from Marine City to Ludington — where it catches a ferry to Wisconsin and, eventually, makes its way to Oregon.

The 500-mile Michigan stretch of U.S. Bike Route 35 begins in New Buffalo, in southwest Michigan near the Indiana border. It rolls up the west side of the state, crosses the Mackinac Bridge and ends in Sault Ste. Marie.

Both these routes are still works in progress, but Krupiarz said it's worth the time and effort.

"It's really coming into recognition that bicycling infrastructure really pays off," she said. She cited a study by the **National Association of Realtors** that found the one-time expenditure of public funds to build bike trails generates a ninefold return on the investment.

"There is a great amount of economic benefit to be had the more that we get these trails and other bicycling routes connected and also promoted," Krupiarz said.

And, speaking of promotion, she said, the alliance is beginning to discuss promotional efforts with the state's Pure Michigan tourism promotion.

Coming into the fall color season, Krupiarz said, now is a good time to consider Michigan's bike trails as a vehicle for tourism.

"There are a lot of trees along our trails," she said, "and this is another way to see everything at more of a slow pace and just to be able to take it all in and not be behind the windshield of a car, and smell the autumn breeze."

Excerpts from a study on the Economic Impact of the Little (Miami) Trail

The Little Miami Trail is approximately 76 miles long and runs from mid NW Ohio nearly to Cincinnati. In 1999 an economic study of the impact of the trail was commissioned by the Ohio Greenways Initiative. Residents, property owners, business people and realtors were consulted and surveyed by the consultant. The complete study is 34 pages long: I have excerpted some of the key results/responses.

"In recent years, communities, rails-to-trails organizations, and other greenway/bike path groups have been curious about the affects trails have had on the local economy and properties near and adjacent to the trail corridor." This brought about this professional study.

"The residential, business and real estate surveys showed that the trail is considered a valued asset to residential and business interests. Many of those surveyed loved the trail for its beauty, convenience, accessibility and purpose. As an exercise facility, the Little Miami Scenic Trail proves successful and heavily used to improve one's health, even during the 'off season'. A vast amount of people commented on the joy of hearing and watching visitors enjoying the trail. Seeing everyone laughing and talking shows the enjoyment and appreciation of those using the trail."

Economic Findings

Property Values

- No property owners felt that the trail detracted from their property values
- Residents identified no problems related to the trail
- More than half of the respondents felt that the trail had added to their property value
- No residents believed that the trail had decreased their property value
- 84% of respondents felt that living near the trail is better than they had anticipated prior to the construction of the trail
- 88% felt that the trail had improved the quality of life in their neighborhood

Business Survey

- 61% of businesses surveyed said that the trail had increased patronage and revenue in their business
- About half felt that the trail had increased the value of their business property
- 78% expressed no problems associated with the trail

Real Estate

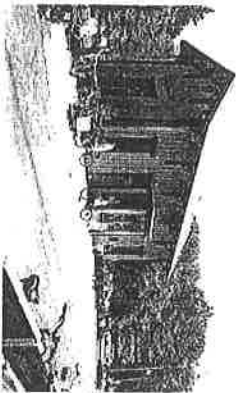
- Virtually all realtors indicated that close proximity to the trail was considered an asset in selling property
- Property on the trail had an increased sales value

Perhaps one of the most important comments in the study was the assertion that this study -- which was highly positive towards all aspects of the trail -- reflected results comparable to those that had been demonstrated in various trail studies across the country and done by a variety of consultants, government entities or academia. In other words, carefully controlled studies by experts almost always showed positive economic results from the construction of a non-motorized trail.

Little Miami Scenic Trail

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
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Little Miami Scenic Trail



Yellow Springs Station in Greene County

Length 78 mi (126 km)^{III}

Location Southwestern Ohio

Designation



Ohio State Bike Route 1

North Country National Scenic Trail

Trailheads

Springfield to Newtown, Ohio

Use Multi-use

Elevation Change -486 ft (-148.1 m) ^{III}

Highest Point Springfield trailhead

Lowest Point Little Miami Golf Center trailhead,
Newtown

The Little Miami Scenic Trail, also known as the Little Miami Scenic River Trail^[3] and Little Miami Bike Trail, is a rail trail that runs through five southwestern counties in the U.S. state of Ohio. As of 2008, it is the longest paved trail in the United States,^[4] stretching 78 mi (126 km)^[1] from Springfield to Newtown, Ohio. The multi-use trail sees frequent use by hikers and bicyclists, as well as the occasional horseback rider. Over 350,000 people made use of the trail in 2005.^[5]

Most of the trail runs along a dedicated, car-free corridor maintained by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources as Little Miami State Park. The unusually linear state park passes through four counties, with a right-of-way running about 50 miles (80 km) long and averaging 66 feet (20 m) in width^[6] for a total of about 707 acres (286 ha).^[citation needed] Elsewhere, the corridor ranges from 8 to 10 feet (2.4 to 3.0 m) in width.^[7]

The Little Miami Scenic Trail is signed in Clark, Greene, and Hamilton Counties as State Bike Route 1,^{[8][9][10]} elsewhere, the trail uses the Ohio to Erie Trail's green-on-white logo. The Little Miami trail is an incrementally-growing section of not only the Ohio to Erie Trail, but also the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route, Buckeye Trail, and North Country National Scenic Trail.^[11]